United Nations A/73/268

General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 July 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 20 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development: disaster risk reduction

Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/218. In accordance with Assembly resolution 71/227, the report also includes a section on an effective global response to address the impacts of the El Niño phenomenon. Since 2015, a global policy architecture has been developed with the aim of guiding the integration of disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change adaptation. Many countries have or are in the process of developing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies towards global target (e) of the Sendai Framework, to substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in place by 2020.

More can be done to leverage the dividends of disaster risk reduction to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Concerted efforts are needed to support the integration of disaster risk reduction strategies with sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategies. To turn strategies into action, tailored disaster risk reduction financing instruments and greater risk-informed investments by the public and private sectors are needed.

Entities across the United Nations system have integrated disaster risk reduction into their strategic frameworks and are coming together to offer a comprehensive package of support to Member States in line with the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development.

* A/73/150.

18-12530 (E) 070818

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I. State of disaster risk

1. Disaster risk reduction must be at the core of sustainable development strategies and economic policies if countries are to fulfil the commitment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind. This ambition is supported by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which calls for special attention to be paid to people disproportionately affected by disasters, especially the poorest. Significant progress has been made in implementing the Sendai Framework since its adoption by Member States in March 2015. A risk-informed approach is progressively permeating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, for many of the world's poorest countries and most vulnerable communities, disasters continue to reverse development gains, undermine resilience, exacerbate inequality and curtail prospects for economic growth.

2. Using probabilistic disaster risk models, it is possible to estimate the value and vulnerability of assets in hazard-prone areas to calculate a country's average annual losses from disasters. This represents the amount that a country would have to set aside each year to cover the cost of future disasters. When comparing average annual losses against gross domestic product, it is apparent that risk is concentrated in low- and middle-income countries, in particular small island developing States (see table below). The World Bank estimates that disasters push 26 million people into poverty each year.[1] Poor people are exposed to hazards more often, lose a greater share of their assets when hit, have limited safety nets and receive less institutional support.[1] Women, children and people in vulnerable situations are often disproportionately affected (see General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II).

Average annual losses in relation to gross domestic product[2]

	Exposed value	*Average annual losses*		*Average annual losses GDP*
Country category	*Millions of United States dollars*	*Millions of United States dollars*	*Percentage*	*Percentage*
Least developed countries	1 710 610	7 712	4.508	8.491
Small island developing States	2 250 059	11 840	5.262	17.154
Landlocked developing countries	2 034 166	3 346	1.645	4.162
Low-income	6 878 049	16 919	2.460	8.064
Lower-middle-income	14 337 082	30 352	2.117	6.698
Upper-middle-income	60 860 908	67 984	1.117	3.418
High-income	195 550 673	169 650	0.868	3.639

Abbreviation: GDP, gross domestic product.

3. Globally, disaster mortality continued on a downward trend over the past 12 months, while disaster economic losses continued to rise.[3] It is estimated that annual economic losses attributed to natural hazards in 2017 were some of the highest on record, exceeding $334 billion.[4] The Atlantic hurricane season accounted for a

[1] Stephane Hallegatte and others, *Unbreakable: Building the Resilience of the Poor in the Face of Natural Disasters*, Climate Change and Development Series (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2017).

[2] United Nations, *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction Atlas: Unveiling Global Disaster Risk* (Geneva, 2017).

[3] Catholic University of Louvain, Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, "Natural disasters in 2017: lower mortality, higher cost", *CRED Crunch*, issue No. 50 (March 2018).

[4] See www.emdat.be (accessed on 27 July 2018).

significant proportion of economic losses, causing $229 billion in damage across the Caribbean region,[3] with an unprecedented six major consecutive hurricanes in a season.[5] In 2017, 18.8 million people were newly internally displaced by disasters, compared with 11.8 million by conflict.[6]

4. The full extent of disaster risk, however, is by and large unknown. Direct disaster losses are considerably higher than internationally reported figures. In many countries, there is insufficient disaggregated information on where disaster risk currently exists, where it is being created, how cascading hazards interact and how climate change will shape disaster risk. Progress towards priority 1 of the Sendai Framework, on understanding disaster risk in all its dimensions, could contribute to closing this gap.

5. What is known is that sustainable development cannot be achieved through repetitive cycles of disasters, response and recovery. To ensure that those furthest behind are not left behind, action must be taken now not only to reduce existing risk but also to stop the creation of new risk. Structural measures to reduce disaster risk need to be accompanied by measures that reduce economic, social and environmental vulnerability and exposure to disasters, including resilience-building measures that enable exposed communities to withstand the impact of frequent small-scale disasters. Disaster risk reduction should be a priority for all actors, sectors and institutions working towards sustainable and inclusive development.

II. Realizing coherence among the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and globally agreed agendas and frameworks related to sustainable development

6. Disaster risk reduction is cross-cutting. The outcomes of the Sendai Framework will only be achieved through a coherent implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change and other related intergovernmental agreements. Work is under way to realize this through shared risk analysis, guidance for integrated national policy development and implementation and common monitoring.

A. Pursuing a coherent and mutually reinforcing implementation of the Sendai Framework across intergovernmentally agreed agendas and policy frameworks

7. In its resolution 72/218, the General Assembly encouraged States to continue to prioritize and support the development of inclusive national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020, in accordance with target (e) of the Sendai Framework, and to promote synergies with existing national policies and plans, including national climate change adaptation plans. The Assembly also welcomed efforts to develop coherent metrics for reporting under the Sendai Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant instruments.

8. In its resolution 71/222, the General Assembly proclaimed the period from 2018 to 2028 the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development". The Secretary-General's action plan for the Decade promotes coherence across the

[5] United States of America, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "Extremely active 2017 Atlantic hurricane season finally ends", 30 November 2017.

[6] For further information on the impact of recent disasters, see the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development to be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

water-related Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement.

9. Disaster risk reduction financing was discussed at a special meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the theme "Aftermath of recent hurricanes: achieving a risk-informed and resilient 2030 Agenda", held on 24 October 2017. In the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development, held in April 2018, Member States recognized that the financial response of the international system to disasters was insufficient and that better disaster risk reduction and resilience-building mechanisms were required. Subsequently, Member States invited the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development to examine existing frameworks and best practices on risk management being implemented by development banks and related financial institutions and requested the Task Force to discuss climate and disaster resilience in development financing in its report in 2019.

10. The Sendai Framework calls for the leveraging of science and technology as a means of implementation and for support for evidence-based disaster risk reduction strategies. Innovative technology for disaster risk reduction was discussed at the integration segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council and the multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, held in May and June 2018. Deliberations were focused on increasing investments and capacities in science and technology to strengthen early warning systems and to develop evidence-based and inclusive disaster risk reduction strategies in synergy with local, traditional and indigenous knowledge. The launch of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries can support this effort.

11. The wider application of geospatial information is an important contribution to the implementation of the Sendai Framework. In its resolution 2018/14, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters as a guide for Member States to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality geospatial information and services across all phases of disaster risk reduction and management. At the high-level segment of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50), held in June 2018, participating States endorsed a draft resolution on space as a driver of sustainable development, in which the need for stronger coordination and support for the fulfilment of the Sendai Framework through improved access to space-based data and space infrastructure was reiterated, and recommended its adoption by the General Assembly.

12. The international human rights treaty bodies are also drawing on the Sendai Framework in their concluding observations and recommendations. At its 2018 session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women endorsed its general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change. During the celebrations to mark the seventieth anniversary of the International Law Commission, the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations in New York organized a side event to discuss the draft articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters, which included the draft articles on disaster risk reduction. The General Assembly will further discuss the draft articles at its seventy-third session.

13. The need for greater consideration of disaster risk reduction in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals was emphasized at the 2018 meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Countries demonstrated in their voluntary national reviews how disasters undermine sustainable development and that reducing disaster risk can support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This was reflected in the ministerial declaration of

the high-level political forum, in which Member States called for augmented efforts to integrate disaster risk reduction into national and local sustainable development strategies and plans.

14. The 2019 high-level political forum, to be convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, will provide a critical opportunity to review the extent to which a risk-informed approach has been embedded in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to highlight where greater attention is needed. It will be essential to utilize the 2019 high-level political forum to ensure that the link between disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainable development is firmly implanted in the implementation and review of the Sustainable Development Goals. As the voluntary national reviews will inform these discussions, it is important that national Sendai Framework focal points be engaged early in the national review process. Deliberations and outcomes of the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, to be hosted by the Government of Switzerland and convened and organized by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva from 13 to 17 May 2019, as well as the 2019 *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, will also provide key inputs to the 2019 high-level political forum.

B. Advancing coherence in the development and monitoring of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainable development policies and strategies

15. To translate the coherence between international agendas into integrated policies, strategies and programmes, many countries require technical and capacity development support on common approaches to data collection, shared risk analysis and joint monitoring across hazards and sectors. The United Nations system can build on and amalgamate its existing capacities in these areas to provide countries with more effective collective support to develop and monitor multisectoral, risk-informed and prevention-oriented sustainable development strategies.

Monitoring the Sendai Framework

16. The open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction requested the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to support Member States to measure progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework through an online monitoring system. In December 2017, the Sendai Framework monitoring process was initiated in Bonn, Germany, with a workshop on monitoring the Sendai Framework targets in conjunction with the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sendai Framework monitor was launched in March 2018, with accompanying technical guidance on the collection and analysis of disaggregated data. It provides an online platform for Member States to report on progress against the seven global targets and 38 indicators of the Sendai Framework and the disaster risk reduction targets of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 11 and 13, as well as options for customized national indicators.

17. The Sendai Framework monitor also functions as a tool to guide risk-informed policy decisions and to allocate resources to prevention accordingly. As of July 2018, 47 countries are in the process of reporting through the monitor. Data from the monitor are shared with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to inform the deliberations of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Countries are requested to upload data for all global targets for the period 2015–2017 by 1 October 2018 to inform global stocktaking of several intergovernmental agreements in 2019, including the 2030 Agenda, the Paris

Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. Accelerated efforts are needed to increase the number of countries reporting through the monitor to provide a robust global overview of progress by 2019.

National climate change adaptation strategies

18. The development of national climate change adaptation strategies and national disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 represents an opportunity to maximize synergies and the shared use of data sets and risk assessments. To this end, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change developed guidance on integrating climate change with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework. The Least Developed Countries Expert Group under the Framework Convention is taking this work forward to ensure coherence between national climate change adaptation plans and national disaster risk reduction strategies. The Adaptation Committee is currently exploring, at the technical expert level, how the Sendai Framework indicators and monitoring process can support the definition of adaptation goals and indicators under the Paris Agreement.

Integrated risk assessments

19. The interlinkages between the Sendai Framework, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda demonstrate the increasing recognition of connections between social, environmental and economic risks. This demands an integrated, multi-hazard, cross-sectoral approach to assessing risk and a deeper understanding of social and environmental vulnerability.

20. A global risk assessment framework, currently under development by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in consultation with global risk assessment experts, will provide an open source online portal where the results of risk assessments across sectors and hazards can be standardized and displayed in an interoperable format. Covering the expanded scope of hazards and risks in line with the Sendai Framework, the global risk assessment framework will translate risk assessments across geographical areas, sectors and scales into actionable and timely recommendations for disaster risk reduction and prevention strategies available to decision makers.

21. Spearheaded by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Index for Risk Management provides open source risk profiles for humanitarian crises and disasters. Risk profiles support decision-making for crisis response, recovery, prevention and preparedness for use by humanitarian and development actors. Responding to the need for localized risk assessments, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are currently piloting the Index at the subnational level. The complementary application of these tools, among others, is critical to the implementation of a common methodology for risk assessments across the United Nations humanitarian and development systems towards an integrated approach to prevention and the more systematic provision of support to countries with regard to data analysis and risk assessment.

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

22. Preparations are under way for the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2019. The biennial Global Platform is the principal forum to inform policymaking on current issues related to disaster risk reduction and to monitor and enhance the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Held under the theme "Resilience dividend: towards sustainable and inclusive societies", and with the 2020 deadline for target (e) of the Sendai Framework in mind, the 2019 Global Platform will discuss

the development and implementation of inclusive and coherent disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategies. Sessions will be focused on the importance of local action, as well as integrating disaster and climate risk into public and private investments and economic planning, among other things. Representation from a broad range of ministries and stakeholders can facilitate discussions and outcomes that support a risk-informed approach across sectors. The deliberations and outcomes of the Global Platform, as well as the regional platforms for disaster risk reduction, are expected to contribute to the work of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The 2019 Global Platform is also included in the road map for the Secretary-General's climate summit to be held in 2019.

C. Financing disaster risk reduction and risk-informed investments for sustainable development

23. Tailored disaster risk reduction financing instruments are needed to turn national and local disaster risk reduction strategies into action and to create the fiscal space for a risk-informed approach to sustainable development. Advances have been made in disaster risk financing, including regional and national risk transfer schemes, standby credit facilities and State-contingent debt instruments, among others, to protect fiscal balances, avoid debt distress and finance recovery efforts. Coverage of these mechanisms should be expanded and strengthened to ensure that they create incentives for disaster risk reduction and that the funds are used to incentivize early action and to "build back better".

24. Disaster risk financing rarely covers frequent losses from small-scale disasters,[7] which increasingly erode the resilience of the poorest households and communities. Countries often resort to diverting funds from other areas of budget expenditure and deepening their sovereign debt. Resources spent on recovery and reconstruction could have been allocated to investments in sustainable development.

25. As countries develop integrated national financing frameworks and pipelines of investable projects for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is vital that those frameworks and projects are risk-informed and accompanied by disaster risk reduction financing instruments. Most countries do not have a dedicated budget for disaster risk reduction.[8] Greater engagement by ministries of finance, the economy and planning can enhance the allocation of domestic resources to disaster risk reduction, include disaster risk reduction in budgeting and financial planning across all relevant sectors and align sustainable development strategies, financing frameworks and infrastructure plans with disaster risk reduction strategies.

26. In most economies, private investment comprises the majority of total capital formation. Capital investment by the private sector is therefore critical for sustainable development. Disaster risk is rarely made explicit and is often only discovered in the event of a disaster. Hidden contingent liabilities arising from unaccounted disaster risk come bundled together with apparent comparative advantages in locations that seemingly offer potential for short-term gains. Regulating the conduct and disclosure of disaster risk assessment can provide an understanding of hidden fiscal liabilities to promote longer-term risk-informed investments by the private and public sectors.

[7] Lydia Poole, "A calculated risk: how donors should engage with risk financing and transfer mechanisms", Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Cooperation Working Paper No. 17 (Paris, OECD, 2014).

[8] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Towards disaster-risk sensitive investments: the disaster risk-integrated operational risk model" (London, The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2016).

27. As no country can reduce disaster risk alone, enhanced means of implementation and international cooperation, including South-South cooperation and global partnerships, are critical to implement the Sendai Framework. In January 2018, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development approved a disaster risk reduction policy marker. The establishment of a policy marker for disaster risk reduction can address the challenges in accurately tracking and reporting on funding that contributes to disaster risk reduction and can encourage the integration of disaster risk reduction in national budgets, as well as in bilateral development cooperation, infrastructure financing and support from international and regional development banks, thus supporting the achievement of the target (f) of the Sendai Framework, to substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries. In November 2017, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean established a debt swap task force to develop a mechanism to swap external debt of Caribbean countries for climate adaptation investments. Furthermore, in June 2018, the Latin American Network on Risk Management and Climate Change in Public Investment reaffirmed its commitments to support countries to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into national public investment systems.

D. Coordination of disaster risk reduction across the United Nations system

28. To provide countries with more coordinated and effective support to reduce disaster risk and translate integrated policies into programmes on the ground, entities of the United Nations system are required to adopt a risk-informed approach in the discharge of their respective mandates, in accordance with commitments made in the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development. The Senior Leadership Group on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience highlighted the need to review progress and the support provided to countries towards target (e) of the Sendai Framework, as well as to develop common diagnostics and joint guidance across climate change, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development as priority areas.

29. United Nations entities have continued to integrate the Sendai Framework into their strategic plans to ensure that activities are risk-informed and contribute to disaster risk reduction. Prevention, resilience, addressing climate change and reducing the number of people affected by disasters are areas for collaboration and shared outcomes of the common chapter in each of the strategic plans of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) strategic plans for the period 2018–2021.

30. In the UNICEF strategic plan, this translates into enhanced coherence and connectedness between humanitarian action and longer-term programming through the analysis of risks related to disaster, conflict and climate change for programming that supports preparedness, recovery and resilience against future shocks. In the UNFPA strategic plan, the focus of humanitarian intervention strategies will shift from reacting to disasters to applying a resilience approach that links prevention, preparedness, response and risk mitigation. This is supported by disaster risk reduction plans that are regularly informed by sex- and age-disaggregated population data and integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as gender-based violence. The UN-Women strategic plan supports gender-responsive risk analysis, the contribution of women and women's organizations to disaster risk management plans, gender-responsive recovery preparedness and the collection of sex-disaggregated disaster-related data. In the UNDP strategic plan, disaster risk reduction and resilience

is a core element of an integrated approach to enhance national prevention and recovery capacities and to address drivers of risk to avoid crises and return quickly to stable development after crises.

31. UNDP, in collaboration with other United Nations entities, has supported the integration of disaster and climate risk in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals through the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support initiative in 14 countries in the past year. Furthermore, the inter-agency Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative partnership continues to support countries to identify critical capacity gaps in risk reduction and to develop coherent interventions to address these gaps that bring to bear expertise from across and beyond the United Nations system. The Initiative has developed a new programmatic phase to offer integrated and joint capacity development support on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

32. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) adopted a strategic workplan on disaster risk reduction and resilience for the period 2017–2020, entitled "Taking Sendai forward". The workplan builds on the comparative advantage of IOM to assist countries in taking forward the areas of the Sendai Framework relating to migrants and migration, to address the disaster-related drivers of migration and to support the integration of the mobility dimensions of disaster risk reduction in inter-agency strategies.

33. The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization adopted a medium-term strategy for the period 2018–2021, which highlights disaster risk reduction as an area in which the organization will further strengthen its cooperation in line with the Sendai Framework.

34. To build capacities for resilient health systems, the World Health Organization (WHO) Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 will include an all-hazards health emergency risk management approach that integrates the International Health Regulations (2005) with the health aspects of the Sendai Framework and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals. With a view to implementing a more coordinated and cross-cutting service delivery approach, in May 2018 the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and WHO signed a new framework collaboration agreement to strengthen the understanding and management of health risks associated with extreme weather, water, climate and related environmental events, including in urban areas where poor air quality and extreme heat are emerging health risks. In June 2018, the WMO Executive Council decided to advance the implementation of the WMO disaster risk reduction road map.

35. Supporting countries to strengthen disaster risk reduction towards ending hunger is a focus of the World Food Programme strategic plan for 2017–2021. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) conducts its disaster risk reduction work through its strategic objective on increasing the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises, which supports countries to plan, implement and monitor disaster risk reduction across agriculture-related sectors. The work of FAO on disaster risk reduction is anchored in the Sendai Framework while linking with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises of the Committee on World Food Security, the "One Health" approach and the sustaining peace agenda.

36. The World Bank Group is mainstreaming risk management throughout its portfolio. The updated operational risk assessment framework requires all new projects be screened for disaster and climate risks, and new initiatives aim to ensure that infrastructure systems are designed, built and maintained to maximize resilience. The Group has identified mobilizing private capital, improving the resilience of

urbanization and infrastructure, building resilience to climate change and strengthening disaster risk management capacity in fragile contexts as priority areas.

37. It is expected that the reform of the United Nations development system will strengthen the capacity of United Nations country teams to deliver more coordinated and integrated support to countries on disaster risk reduction across sectors, including through risk-informed United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and by fully leveraging all relevant assets and expertise across the United Nations development system. Revamping the United Nations development system at the regional level will provide an opportunity to strengthen coordinated support and make more effective use of specialized agencies and regional entities of the United Nations system to further deepen the understanding of disaster risk in the economic and social analysis provided to countries in the design and monitoring of national development strategies. Implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience will lead to the efficient provision by the United Nations of diverse support to countries and is a significant contribution to the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the reform of the United Nations development system.

38. Meanwhile, UNDP is convening entities of the United Nations system to develop system-wide guidance on resilience to bring greater coherence across the work of the Organization on resilience-building. The guidance will take a multi-hazard and multi-risk perspective, encompassing disasters, climate, humanitarian action, health, food security, gender inequality, violent conflict and human rights. It will provide United Nations country teams with guidance to utilize resilience as an integrated programming approach to delivering the 2030 Agenda and to ensure coherence in implementing programmes that support resilience across sectors. The guidance will also contribute to the reform of the United Nations development system and an integrated approach to prevention.

39. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction completed an organizational review and change management process to realign its strategic focus and business processes to ensure that it is fit for purpose to deliver its mandate for years to come. Without reducing the total number of staff, the change process reduced the overall proportion of the budget spent on staff costs and strengthened the Office's regional presence to improve the effectiveness of support provided to countries to implement the Sendai Framework. The change management process is in line with the reform of the United Nations development system and management processes and there is strong commitment to efficiency and accountability.

III. Implementing the Sendai Framework at the regional and national levels

40. On the basis of global policies on disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainable development, regional and subregional mechanisms have established integrated region-specific policies that support national policymaking and strategy development. National and local disaster risk reduction strategies are a requisite for a risk-informed approach to sustainable development. The participation of national Sendai Framework focal points in national sustainable development coordination mechanisms can help to reflect global policy coherence in integrated national programmes. Progress in the establishment or strengthening of national platforms for disaster risk reduction has also reinforced guidance to pursue a risk-informed approach to sustainable development. Greater commitment by all actors is needed to translate national policies and strategies into legislation and regulations and to turn integrated policies into programmes, particularly at the local level.

41. The United Nations continues to provide technical guidance to countries to develop national and local disaster risk reduction strategies, including the establishment or development of disaster loss databases, which provide an evidence base to develop or update disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework. As of July 2018, 71 countries and territories had developed or were in the process of developing disaster risk reduction strategies aligned with the Sendai Framework.

42. During the reporting period, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction trained 975 national and local government officials and stakeholders from 66 countries on the development of disaster risk reduction strategies, on understanding disaster risk and on the coherent implementation of the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Forty per cent of participants were women. A further 162 participants received online training. National disaster risk assessment guidelines were launched in October 2017, which focus on the first priority for action of the Sendai Framework, on understanding disaster risk. The Office is working in close collaboration with Governments, stakeholders and United Nations partners on a capacity development strategy to be launched in 2019.

Africa

43. In January 2018, the African Union Executive Council adopted a common position on disaster risk reduction, with commitments to galvanize action around inclusive and evidence-based national and local disaster risk reduction strategies, including by strengthening institutional capacities and mobilizing domestic resources. This was echoed by the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2018, which called for the strengthening of political support, capacities and resources for integrating disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainable development at all levels.

44. The Economic Community of Central African States deliberated on and approved the revised priority actions for the implementation of the Sendai Framework at the third ministerial conference and the first Central Africa joint conference on meteorology and disaster risk reduction, hosted by the Government of the Congo in Brazzaville in October 2017, which followed the sixth subregional platform for disaster risk reduction in Central Africa. The platform provided guidance on integrating disaster risk reduction into national legislation across sectors, including initiatives to enhance understanding of disaster risk, the creation or strengthening of multisectoral national platforms for disaster risk reduction and the integration of disaster risk reduction across public regulations, standards and codes while strengthening the legal and regulatory environment.

45. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) convened a regional disaster risk reduction conference, hosted by the Government of South Africa in Pretoria in March 2018. In the outcome statement, SADC member States committed to integrated monitoring and reporting on disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainable development actions. Member States also recognized the need for greater financing for disaster risk reduction, committed to prioritizing disaster risk and climate change-informed investments for sustainable development and were called upon to significantly increase the allocation of national budgets for disaster risk reduction.

46. The peer support group of the Regional United Nations Development Group for East and Southern Africa developed guidance on sustainability and resilience and on risk-informed programming to ensure that a disaster risk-informed approach is incorporated in the elaboration of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. The guidelines also support resilient and risk-informed investments by the public and private sectors. The United Nations-African Union cluster on

humanitarian matters and disaster risk management approved a workplan for 2017 and 2018. The workplan outlines targeted support to the African Union Commission in implementing the plan of action at the national level and further integrating disaster risk reduction into the African Union policy organs.

47. Thirteen countries[9] have national disaster risk reduction strategies that are aligned with the Sendai Framework and three countries[10] are in the process of alignment. Furthermore, disaster loss tracking training was delivered in seven countries, which is also a key contribution to multi-hazard probabilistic risk profiles that support disaster and climate risk-informed investments. Fifty local governments were also supported to monitor and review their progress in implementing the Sendai Framework. The National Risk Atlas tool, developed by UNDP with the support of the European Union and the World Bank, has also been piloted in Rwanda and Uganda to support risk-informed development planning in all new public and private investments.

The Americas and the Caribbean

48. The sixth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas, hosted by the Government of Colombia and organized jointly with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cartagena from 20 to 22 June 2018, was an opportunity to review progress made and provide guidance for moving forward with regard to the regional action plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas. Six countries[11] have finalized national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework, and the strategies of 11 countries and territories are currently under development.[12] To date, 1,800 local governments have committed to enhancing resilience through the Making Cities Resilient campaign, including 50 cities in 14 countries that have applied the disaster resilience scorecard[13] to assess their resilience to disaster risk.

49. In the declaration adopted at the sixth Regional Platform,[14] countries were called upon to develop and strengthen disaster risk reduction plans and strategies in line with target (e) of the Sendai Framework, and the importance of strengthening institutional frameworks to integrate disaster risk reduction across development measures was recognized. Member States highlighted the importance of integrating disaster risk reduction in all sectors and positioning disaster risk reduction as a public policy priority at the national and local levels. This requires strengthened public-private partnerships and a commitment to invest domestic resources. The importance of including disaster risk reduction in national inputs to the high-level political forum on sustainable development was also reiterated. At a special session on recovery in the Caribbean held during the Regional Platform, it was concluded that building resilience should be transformational. To this end, social protection for the most vulnerable, the safeguarding of infrastructure, economic diversification, environmental protection and operational readiness were highlighted as five critical pillars for resilience in the Caribbean. Jamaica will host the Regional Platform in 2020, which member States decided to rename the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean.

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[9] Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, the Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, the Niger and Nigeria.

[10] Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

[11] Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala.

[12] Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

[13] See United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, "Disaster resilience scorecard for cities". Available at https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/53349.

[14] See http://eird.org/pr18/docs/cartagena-declaration.pdf.

50. The comprehensive disaster management strategy for the Caribbean has been aligned with the Sendai Framework, including the use of common indicators to ensure coherence in monitoring and reporting. The Central American policy for disaster risk management was approved at the Central American presidential summit held in Panama in December 2017, providing guidance to countries to develop national plans and strategies for disaster risk reduction with corresponding budget allocations. The Andean strategy for disaster risk management has also been aligned with the Sendai Framework, and an action plan with related indicators is under development. Moreover, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States approved the regional strategy for disaster risk management in the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2018–2030.

51. The United Nations Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean inter-agency working group for resilience is fostering a joint approach to provide coordinated support to countries on disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change adaptation. The working group is supporting United Nations country teams to adopt a resilience perspective in the common country analysis and in the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, and is guiding country teams to support countries in conducting national risk assessments and disaster risk reduction capacity assessments for evidence-based national strategies.

52. Furthermore, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in partnership with the National Emergency System of Uruguay and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales) is developing a training module to analyse and better understand the root causes of national and transboundary disasters in Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil. UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, have initiated a programme to strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at the regional, national and community level in five Caribbean countries.

Arab region

53. The Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030 was adopted by the Arab Coordination Mechanism for Disaster Risk Reduction in January 2018 and endorsed by Heads of State in April 2018. The Strategy is in line with the Sendai Framework and links it to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Arab plan of action on climate change. Accompanied by a programme of work for the period 2018–2020, the Strategy emphasizes the need to better understand disaster risk to tackle risk drivers in the region, and to strategically plan actions to mitigate impact, with a focus on the growing frequency and intensity of drought and flooding events linked to climate change. It also gives guidance on integrating disaster risk reduction throughout development programming.

54. Seven countries[15] have aligned disaster risk reduction strategies with the Sendai Framework, and a further seven[16] are in the process of doing so. Concurrently, United Nations country teams in seven countries have developed United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks that integrate disaster risk reduction and the priorities of the Sendai Framework to provide more coordinated support to countries in adopting a risk-informed approach to sustainable development.

[15] Bahrain, the Comoros, Egypt, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Tunisia.

[16] Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, the Sudan and the United Arab Emirates.

55. Twenty cities joined the Making Cities Resilient campaign, bringing the total number of cities committed to 350 in the Arab region. Workshops were also conducted in nine cities in Mauritania and Tunisia to develop city resilience action plans based on in-depth local risk assessments and to build institutional capacities to respond to multiple hazards alongside health, food, environmental and economic insecurity.

56. Preparations are under way for the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, which will be hosted in Tunis by the Government of Tunisia and co-organized by the African Union Commission, the League of Arab States and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction from 9 to 13 October 2018. It is the first time that Member States from the Africa and the Arab regions will come together at the same regional platform.

Asia and the Pacific

57. The 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, hosted by the Government of Mongolia and jointly organized with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction from 3 to 6 July 2018 in Ulaanbaatar, provided the first opportunity to review the implementation of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Guided by the review of progress conducted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Asia Partnership, key milestones achieved include the establishment of national coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction, including national platforms, as well as the integration of disaster risk reduction in medium- and long-term development plans. As of July 2018, six countries[17] have aligned their disaster risk reduction strategies with the Sendai Framework.

58. In the declaration adopted in Ulaanbaatar,[18] member States resolved to implement the action plan for the period 2018–2020 of the Asia Regional Plan, which focuses attention to where greater efforts are needed to achieve the Sendai Framework. To integrate disaster risk reduction into sectoral plans, countries are called upon to facilitate greater collaboration between national disaster risk management authorities and sectoral ministries, including collaboration for the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of data on disaster risk, loss and damage. The decentralization of disaster risk reduction responsibilities, supported by budget allocations, legislation and policies that promote local leadership in planning and implementation, and tools to support local coordination, are also emphasized. Furthermore, countries are encouraged to ensure that disaster risk reduction strategies are backed by investment frameworks, to develop new, and strengthen existing, funding mechanisms for disaster risk reduction and to create an enabling environment for private sector investment in disaster risk reduction. This includes enforcing infrastructure construction regulations and adding disaster risk reduction as a marker for the approval of projects. The action plan also calls for the enhancement of the role of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Development Group Asia-Pacific to support countries in implementing the Sendai Framework. The Government of Australia will host the next Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2020.

59. The ESCAP 2017 regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific emphasizes disaster risk reduction and climate change in regional cooperation. Moreover, in October 2017 the ESCAP Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction decided to enhance coherence in the implementation of multi-hazard early

[17] Australia, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Mongolia, Nepal and Viet Nam.

[18] See https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/56219_ulaanbaatardeclarationfinal.pdf.

warning systems, the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development and knowledge-sharing across the global development frameworks under the purview of the Asia-Pacific Disaster Resilience Network.

60. At the subregional level, the joint meeting of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable and the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management was convened in Suva, Fiji, by the Pacific Community and the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme in October 2017. Member States discussed progress in implementing the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management. The meeting underscored the importance of engaging national finance and planning agencies to mainstream disaster and climate risk into planning and budgetary decision-making processes, and of promoting public-private partnerships at all levels, among other things.

61. Coordinated support to Pacific island countries and territories on disaster risk reduction has also been enabled by the multi-country United Nations Pacific Strategy (2018–2022). The Strategy adopts a cross-cutting risk governance approach to mainstream climate and disaster risks through the support provided by the United Nations to countries and territories in the Pacific, including through the integration of risk assessments and adaptation measures into planning processes at all levels.

62. The Government of India and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction jointly organized an international workshop on disaster-resilient infrastructure in January 2018. The workshop addressed best practices on the development of risk assessment methodologies and indicators of sustainability for different infrastructure classes; standards, design and regulation of infrastructure development, operations and maintenance; financing for disaster-resilient infrastructure; and reconstruction and recovery of key infrastructure sectors after disasters.

63. At the national level, during the reporting period nine countries received technical support from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and United Nations partners to review and update their national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework as well as support for its monitoring. Fifty local authorities received support to use the disaster resilience scorecard to assess their resilience and inform the development of local action plans, while a further six cities are in the process of developing integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction action plans.

Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus

64. In Europe, work has continued apace to advance the implementation of the Sendai Framework through follow-up of the outcomes and recommendations of the 2017 open forum of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Istanbul, Turkey. For example, the European Science and Technology Advisory Group is taking forward two workstreams identified as priorities for implementing the Sendai Framework in the region, namely, the socioeconomic impacts of disasters and standardizing data.

65. Disaster risk reduction is a priority for the European Union and is now part of its foreign policy through its joint communication on resilience. It is stated in the joint communication that the European Union should more systematically require environmental, climate and disaster risk assessments to identify and prioritize preventive and adaptive measures for risk-informed development investments and territorial and urban planning. During its presidency of the Council of the European Union, Bulgaria prioritized target (e) of the Sendai Framework and initiated a workshop to take stock of progress. The importance of integration with climate change adaptation strategies and coherence across all levels of government, as well

as the need for guidance and tools to develop disaster risk reduction strategies, were highlighted.

66. Progress has also been made to integrate disaster risk reduction into sustainable finance. The European Commission action plan on financing sustainable growth sets out a serious of actions to integrate sustainability into financial decision-making and includes disasters in the environmental and social considerations in investment decision-making for sustainable finance. There was also vocal support for integrating disaster risk as part of financial regulations and risk disclosure standards during a hearing at the European Parliament on disaster risk reduction and financing on 27 February 2018.

67. Disaster risk reduction was a cross-cutting theme of the Economic Commission for Europe Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held in March 2018. In particular, discussions on the review of Sustainable Development Goal 11, on sustainable cities, highlighted the importance of reliable data, inclusive participation and disaster risk reduction financing to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Progress is under way for the next European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, which will be hosted by the Government of Italy in Rome from 21 to 23 November 2018 and will provide further opportunities to explore these issues and others.

68. The second Central Asia and South Caucasus subregional platform for disaster risk reduction was held on 26 and 27 June 2018 in Yerevan, and was hosted by the Government of Armenia and jointly organized with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. Member States reviewed progress against the plan of action of the declaration adopted in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in 2016 on disaster risk reduction for resilience-building. The declaration subsequently adopted in Yerevan[19] highlights pertinent challenges to disaster risk reduction in the region, such as the rising risk of economic losses, risks from technological hazards and the impact of small-scale, slow-onset and recurring disasters, combined with low penetration of risk reduction mechanisms for the poor and most vulnerable. To that end, Member States committed to strengthen regional cooperation, promote the localization of disaster risk assessments and modelling, invest further in disaster risk reduction and make disaster risk assessments a prerequisite for land use, urban planning, infrastructure and housing investments.

69. Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework, 32 countries have conducted national risk assessments to provide data and information to guide the development of national disaster risk reduction strategies. Fourteen countries[20] have developed disaster risk reduction strategies that are aligned with the Sendai Framework and four countries[21] are in the process of doing so as of July 2018. With support from the European Commission, capacity-building at the local level was also strengthened, including through hazard risk vulnerability assessments for municipalities and city-to-city peer reviews. The United Nations system is also supporting coordination and coherence on disaster risk reduction and sustainable development through six new United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in the region.

[19] See https://www.preventionweb.net/files/57668_finalyerevandeclarationeng26.06.181.pdf.

[20] Armenia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

[21] Italy, Portugal, Slovenia and Turkey.

IV. Catalysing the actions of stakeholders and global advocacy on disaster risk reduction

70. While States have the overall responsibility for reducing disaster risk, it is a shared responsibility between Governments and all stakeholders. The United Nations system has an important role to play to support the scale and diversity of partnerships needed to meet the requirements of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda. It can also galvanize the broader public to play their role in disaster risk reduction and sustainable development through public advocacy and communications.

A. Partnerships

71. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction facilitated the establishment of a "Sendai stakeholder group" in February 2018 under the stakeholder engagement mechanism for major groups and other stakeholders of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The stakeholder group aims to maximize the collective impact of partnerships in promoting disaster risk reduction in deliberations and outcomes of the high-level political forum and other intergovernmental discussions related to sustainable development.

72. The World Council on City Data and the International Organization for Standardization, with technical support from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, is developing ISO 37123 for resilient cities. The standard will support priorities for investment and action on disaster risk reduction and resilience and is expected to be published in 2019.

73. To support the implementation of the Sendai Framework science and technology road map, the global science and technology advisory group of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction has been enhanced in terms of its scope and resources. This includes the establishment of a science and technology partnership and regional scientific and technological advisory groups. The focus is on interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration, enhancing the role and engagement of young people in science and technology and bridging the science-policy gap. Specific attention is placed on the economic case for disaster risk reduction, data collection, risk mapping and analysis, and the linking of indigenous knowledge, science and technology.

74. Engagement with the private sector on disaster risk reduction was further strengthened with the launch of new national networks of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Private Sector Alliance for Disaster-resilient Societies (ARISE) in Canada, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru and the United States of America. In the Philippines, partnership between ARISE Philippines, the Government and the Manila Observatory resulted in the establishment of the National Resilience Council, which promotes risk-sensitive investments at the local level, particularly in urban areas.

75. The second International Conference on Disability and Disaster Risk Management was hosted by the Government of Bangladesh in Dhaka in May 2018. The Dhaka Declaration 2015+ outlines specific actions to strengthen engagement in local, national and regional multi-stakeholder platforms and intergovernmental initiatives to implement the Sendai Framework for persons living with disabilities and the establishment of effective mechanisms and guidelines as an input to the Sendai Framework monitor to inform disaster risk reduction policy and practice.

76. An online platform for voluntary commitments by all stakeholders to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework is currently under development.

Building on the voluntary commitments announced before, during and after the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in 2015, the platform is a vehicle to monitor progress, share good practice and ensure that voluntary commitments are aligned with and contribute to the implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. A synthesis and analysis report on the voluntary commitments for the Sendai Framework will be launched at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2019.

77. The International Recovery Platform is an international mechanism for sharing experience and lessons on building back better to support the achievement of priority 4 of the Sendai Framework. At the International Recovery Forum, held in January 2018 in Kobe, Japan, participants shared innovative approaches from past experience on how to achieve resilience by building back better. As agreed at the previous meeting of its steering committee, the strategic framework of the International Recovery Platform will be reviewed to assess progress and determine capacity requirements.

B. Advocacy

78. With a specific focus on reducing urban risk to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11, the Sendai Framework global targets and the objectives of the New Urban Agenda, the Making Cities Resilient campaign continues, with over 3,800 cities and local governments having joined to date. The campaign has developed the disaster resilience scorecard for cities, which allows local governments to assess their disaster resilience and to monitor and review progress and challenges in the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

79. With support from the Government of Japan, World Tsunami Awareness Day in 2017 was marked on 5 November with events around the world to raise awareness of tsunami risks and ways to reduce them. Events focused on the "last mile" of the tsunami early warning chain to ensure that at-risk communities receive timely warnings and know the actions they need to take. Events showcased the North-East Atlantic, Mediterranean and connected seas "Wave 17" tsunami response simulation exercise conducted by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, promoted the World Tsunami Awareness Day high school student summit, held in Okinawa, Japan, and highlighted the regional tsunami awareness programme implemented by UNDP in 81 schools across 18 countries in Asia and the Pacific.

80. Continuing the "Sendai Seven Campaign: Seven Targets, Seven Years", the International Day for Disaster Reduction, held on 13 October, focused in 2017 on target (b) of the Sendai Framework, to substantially reduce the number of people affected by disasters globally. Under the slogan "home safe home", events around the world focused on the safety of the home and the workplace, and a social media campaign reached 23.6 million people.

V. Effective global response to address the impacts of the El Niño phenomenon

81. El Niño and La Niña, the two phases of the El Niño Southern Oscillation, typically occur every three to seven years, with significant effects on weather patterns across the world. For the second half of 2018, the continuation of the El Niño Southern Oscillation at a neutral level is considered to be the most likely scenario.[22]

[22] World Meteorological Organization, "El Niño/La Niña update", March 2018.

During neutral El Niño and La Niña years, it is critical to prepare for, build resilience to and reduce the risks of the next event.

82. The United Nations support to countries affected by the El Niño Southern Oscillation is guided by "Preventing El Niño Southern Oscillation episodes from becoming disasters: a Blueprint for Action". The Blueprint for Action is a tool to support integrated, nationally led and equity-driven plans to prepare for the El Niño Southern Oscillation and other climate hazards, absorbing risks without jeopardizing development gains and informing climate-smart development plans to reduce risk. An inter-agency working group committee co-chaired by UNDP, FAO and WMO Principals has been established to support the implementation of the Blueprint for Action and the inter-agency standard operating procedures for early action to El Niño and La Niña episodes, which were issued by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in March 2018. The standard operating procedures outline development and humanitarian actions by the international system to initiate early action to mitigate the impacts of extreme weather and disease outbreaks caused by El Niño Southern Oscillation episodes. They highlight who needs to act, when and how as soon as there are warning signs of a possible occurrence.

83. The UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa worked with members of the Southern Africa Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee to support the Southern African Development Committee in preparedness for response and early actions to mitigate the impacts of the El Niño Southern Oscillation in 2017. This included reviewing the response and sharing lessons learned from the 2015/16 El Niño-induced droughts, strengthening forecasting and capacities for the provision of climate services and providing support to develop regional and national contingency and coordination plans. Lessons learned during the 2015/16 El Niño event were also documented in Asia and the Pacific in a joint effort by UNDP, ESCAP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum Climate Centre. The subsequent report proposes a six-step approach to strengthen regional coordination and collaboration between agencies and national Governments across the disaster cycle from forecasting and risk management to humanitarian support and post-event recovery. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs is working with FAO, the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the Central American Coordination Centre for Natural Disaster Prevention, the Central American Agricultural Council and government agencies in Central America and the Caribbean to strengthen early warning for drought triggered by El Niño using satellite observations.

84. The 2015/16 El Niño event was devastating for many countries. Combined with the impacts of climate change, it took many lives and brought significant economic losses, setting back communities and countries on their path towards sustainable development. This cannot happen time and time again. As their occurrence can be predicted, resilience must be built and the risks reduced to protect development gains.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

85. The rising economic costs and the persistent social and human impacts of disasters continue to hold the most vulnerable people and the poorest countries behind on the path towards sustainable development. Determined and persistent action is required to reduce existing disaster risk, avoid the creation of new risks and address social and economic vulnerabilities that expose the world's poor to disasters.

A recognition of the current relationship between hazards, climate change, economic growth, poverty and inequality is critical to ensure that no one is left behind.

86. Three years since its adoption, the Sendai Framework is yielding positive results. Several countries have or are in the process of developing new, or are aligning existing, national disaster risk reduction strategies with the Sendai Framework, which is a requisite for risk-informed sustainable development. With a little over two years until the 2020 deadline given for target (e) of the Sendai Framework, the current pace of action should be accelerated. Greater attention is also needed on the development and implementation of local disaster risk reduction strategies. It is critical that disaster risk reduction strategies be integrated within sustainable development strategies and climate change adaptation plans to ensure a risk-informed approach to sustainable development.

87. Strengthened multi-hazard data collection and risk analysis are required in many regions to ensure that disaster risk reduction strategies and policies are evidence-based and context-specific. Capacity development and technical support are also needed to ensure that data are disaggregated to support strategies that are fully inclusive and gender-responsive.

88. The engagement of stakeholders at the global, regional, national and local levels is critical to achieve the objectives of the Sendai Framework. Enhanced efforts are needed to ensure the systematic inclusion and active participation of all stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of disaster risk reduction strategies, including persons living with disabilities, women and girls, elderly persons and the poorest and most marginalized communities.

89. In 2019, the Secretary-General will hold a climate summit, the objectives of which will include increasing the ambition of Member States and key non-party stakeholders with regard to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Member States will also review progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019, under the auspices of the General Assembly. This will be a significant opportunity to assess the extent to which the Goals are being implemented in a risk-informed manner and to position disaster risk reduction at the centre of the implementation and review of the Goals over the next four-year cycle. At the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2019, recommendations will be made on where further focus is needed to guide national policymakers and the deliberations and outcomes of the high-level political forum in 2019, as well as the review of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the midterm review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, among other things.

90. A comprehensive overview of progress towards the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework and the disaster risk reduction targets of the Sustainable Development Goals will be vital to guide discussions at the high-level political forum and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2019. To that end, it is essential that countries report through the Sendai Framework monitor by October 2018 and that national Sendai Framework focal points be engaged in national sustainable development mechanisms and the voluntary national review process.

91. Financing for disaster risk reduction requires greater attention from the international community and national Governments. International financial institutions, regional development banks and the United Nations system need to work together to develop innovative financial instruments for disaster risk reduction and to support national Governments in resource mobilization for disaster risk reduction. Greater engagement with the private sector, both domestically and internationally, is necessary to create incentives and regulations for risk-informed investment and construction practices.

92. The scale of disaster risk reduction requires adequate means of implementation through strengthened modalities of international cooperation and global partnership. To that end, the potential of South-South cooperation for disaster risk reduction should be further leveraged. Progress has been made in integrating a risk-informed approach in the support provided by multilateral and bilateral donors, and should be further expanded.

93. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and its United Nations partners play a central role in providing technical support to countries to implement and monitor the Sendai Framework and to support a risk-informed approach to sustainable development. The United Nations system must fulfil the commitments made in the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, which represent a significant contribution to the reform of the United Nations development system and can support countries to translate integrated global and regional policy frameworks into multisectoral programmes at the national level. The United Nations trust fund for disaster reduction is the instrument to support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework and requires an increase in the volume as well as the further predictability and timeliness of funding.

94. **It is recommended that:**

(a) **States, with increased technical and capacity-building support from the United Nations system and other stakeholders guided by the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, continue to prioritize and resource the development of inclusive national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 and to promote their alignment and integration with sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategies and related financing frameworks;**

(b) **States, with coordinated support from the United Nations system, continue efforts to create or enhance systems to record disaster losses and to establish baselines as reference points for measuring improvements, underpinned by data that are disaggregated by income, sex, age and disability;**

(c) **States utilize the online Sendai Framework monitor to track progress against the global targets of the Sendai Framework, the disaster risk reduction targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and national disaster risk reduction targets;**

(d) **States include preparing for and reducing the risk of El Niño events in multi-hazard national and local disaster risk reduction strategies;**

(e) **States take into account disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the preparatory process for and deliberations of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and other relevant global reviews in 2019, including through the inclusion of national Sendai Framework focal points in the voluntary national review process, and take disaster risk reduction into account in the follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals over the following four years;**

(f) **States actively engage in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in May 2019, with participation across sectors and ministries at the highest level possible, as well as the upcoming regional platforms for disaster risk reduction;**

(g) **International financial institutions, regional development banks and the United Nations system develop disaster risk reduction financing mechanisms to support the implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies,**

encourage national resource mobilization and incentivize risk-informed public and private investments;

(h) States enhance international cooperation, global partnerships and the provision of means of implementation to support the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as middle-income countries facing specific challenges, in the implementation of the Sendai Framework and, in that context, ensure that bilateral and multilateral development assistance are risk-informed;

(i) States consider augmenting their financial contributions to the United Nations trust fund for disaster reduction, as well as regular budget support for the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, to support the efforts of Member States to manage and reduce their disaster risk and implement the Sendai Framework;

(j) Stakeholders, including the private sector, academia, civil society organizations and the media, with their knowledge, experience and resources, proactively engage Governments at the national, subnational and local levels in the implementation of the Sendai Framework and integrate disaster risk reduction in their own policies and programmes, thus contributing to the achievement of risk-informed sustainable development.